The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

1.   **(original)**   A video gaming machine, comprising:

a housing having a display device for displaying a plurality of game elements in a grid having a plurality of cells defined by rows and columns;

a memory device for storing a pay-table; and

a game controller coupled to the display device and the memory device, the game controller being adapted to randomly select the game elements to be displayed in the display device, the selected game elements being selected from a set of possible game elements, and to determine an outcome based on the displayed game elements, a pay-table, and predetermined paylines,

wherein the set of possible game elements includes a bonus element, and wherein the game controller is adapted to identify the presence of the bonus element in one of the cells of at least one column and to modify all of the symbols within the column to wild if a wild character in any one cells of the column would modify the outcome.

2.   **(original)**   A video gaming machine, as set forth in claim 1, wherein the game controller is adapted to display an animation of an enemy breathing fire on the bonus element, changing the symbols in the column to fire to symbolize the changing of the symbols to wild characters.

3.   (currently amended)   A video [gamin] gaming machine, as set forth in claim 1, wherein the bonus element is a jewel.

4.   (original)   A method for playing a video gaming machine, including the steps of:

randomly selecting a plurality of game elements, the selected game elements being selected from a set of possible game elements, the set of possible game elements includes a bonus element;

displaying the plurality of game elements on a display device in a grid having a plurality of cells defined by rows and columns;

determining an outcome based on the displayed game elements, a pay table, and predetermined paylines;

identifying the presence of the bonus element in one of the cells of a column; and

modifying all of the symbols within the column to wild if a wild character in any one cells of the column would modify the outcome.

Please cancel claims 5 - 40.

41.   (original)   A computer program product for playing a video gaming machine, the computer program product comprising a computer usuable storage medium having computer readable program code means embodied in the medium, the computer readable program code means comprising:

computer readable program code means for randomly selecting a plurality of game elements, the selected game elements being selected from a set of possible game elements, the set of possible game elements includes a bonus element;

computer readable program code means for displaying the plurality of game elements on a display device in a grid having a plurality of cells defined by rows and columns;

computer readable program code means for determining an outcome based on the displayed game elements, a pay-table, and predetermined paylines;

computer readable program code means for identifying the presence of the bonus element in one of the cells of a column; and,

computer readable program code means for modifying all of the symbols within the column to wild if a wild character in any one cells of the column would modify the outcome.

42.   **(original)**   A computer program product for playing a video gaming machine, the computer program product comprising a computer usable storage medium having computer readable program code means embodied in the medium, the computer readable program code means comprising:

computer readable program code means for randomly selecting a plurality of game elements from a set of possible game elements;

computer readable program code means for displaying the plurality of game elements in a grid having a plurality of cells defined by rows and columns;

computer readable program code means for determining an outcome based on the displayed game elements, a pay-table, and predetermined paylines; and,

computer readable program code means for activating a bonus game in response to detecting a triggering event, the bonus game being depicted as a contest between the player and the gaming machine.